

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CLUSTER LEADER

- 1. Provide optional and required teacher portfolio development training session for your Cluster Teachers** – You will have numerous required (and optional) opportunities to attend special instructional sessions for Cluster Leaders. When you return to your district, you should take the opportunity to share what you learn with other teachers in your district. Work with your DAC in setting up these additional sessions. **Cluster Teachers are those who will be working with the management of the writing assessments.** In some cases, you may be training teachers who have been closely involved in the development of portfolios for a long period of time; however, in most cases, there are teachers new to the development process. Be aware of their special needs; you may need to provide an additional training session just for them.
- 2. Provide ongoing support to your Cluster Teachers and staff as they help students develop as writers** – Your district has selected you to represent its teachers at the regional level in a role as a professional development and instructional leader. Teachers in your district will begin to look to you for information and support as they begin portfolio development. As Cluster Leader, you should be available to your school/district to answer questions and provide resources for Cluster Teachers to ensure ethical implementation of a school-wide writing program.
- 3. Inform Cluster Teachers about sessions** - You should work with your DAC and/or BAC to notify all teachers (your district intends to train) of the meeting site, date, and time. In some districts, Cluster Leaders handle this responsibility on their own. In others, the DACs work with Cluster Leaders to determine meeting information and notify teachers through principals or other avenues. If you need more information, contact your DAC to determine your district's chosen notification process.
- 4. Obtain and view a recording of your grade-specific "Scoring Training" telecast from KET (telecast dates are announced in the fall)** – This telecast is NOT intended for live use, but instead will be used to support your Cluster Leader Scoring Training and the training you will provide to your Cluster Teachers. The Scoring Training telecasts are updated each year to focus on new issues facing teachers as they score and to provide clarifying information based on training evaluations from previous years. It is critical that you view the videotape before conducting your local district scoring training session to prepare for types of questions and discussion that may arise during training.
- 5. Attend your regional Cluster Leader Scoring Training session (see timeline for dates)** – It is critical that Cluster Leaders have the support they need to conduct training. By attending all training sessions, you will build your own expertise, build

an informational network with other teachers in your region and KDE Writing Consultants.

- 6. Provide a 3 or 6-hour Scoring Training session for Cluster Teachers as close to the actual scoring sessions as possible** - This will mirror the Cluster Leader Scoring Training session you will attend. It is critical that any person who scores portfolios participate in training each year. While the training materials do not change drastically from year to year, the focus of the discussion and other activities differ **every year** and are designed to meet the current needs of scoring teachers. With the complex nature of portfolio scoring, a single training experience is insufficient to nurture knowledgeable, confident, and accurate scorers. Therefore, scorers need to retrain **every year**. **Make sure that Cluster Teachers who score at their individual schools understand the importance of viewing the tape and using the anchor papers and scoring rubric they score the portfolios. Cluster Leaders will ensure accurate records are kept for scoring sessions.**
- 7. Provide on-going support to your Cluster Teachers/scoring team as they begin assessing the portfolios** – Just as teachers in your district need support as they develop portfolios, they will also need support as they begin to score. As students' performance continues to improve, decisions about when portfolios have moved from one performance level into the next become more critical, and in some cases, more difficult to make. Your district's teachers will look to you to assist them in making these decisions. It is critical that you act as a conduit for discussion, but at the same time, that you guide teachers in making these difficult decisions on their own instead of providing scoring decisions for them. In this way, teachers will continue to come to you as a discussion partner while increasing their own expertise and confidence as scorers.
- 8. Maintain close contact with KDE Writing Consultants who will provide and disseminate necessary information** – The Kentucky Department of Education offers a large support network for writing teachers. This network of support exists to provide you and other teachers in your district with information and assistance in writing instruction and, more specifically, portfolio development. Cluster Leaders are strongly encouraged to contact any support personnel available at any time (Contact information is included in the beginning of this handbook, "Kentucky Writing Contacts," page iv.)
- 9. Cluster Leader will work with building principals, faculty, and DAC to establish a policy for maintaining working folders for all levels within the building** – Such policies must include a means of: maintenance at grade level, student access to folders, and efficient movement between grade levels.

CLUSTER LEADERS AS INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERS

STRATEGIES FOR NETWORKING IN YOUR DISTRICT

As a Cluster Leader, you can play a critical role in supporting teachers in their local schools as they work with students to develop as writers. There are many things you can do to support your peers instructionally year and increase the expertise and collegial working relationships of teachers in your district. Following is a list of **suggested** activities/strategies you may consider as you rethink your role as an instructional leader in your district. If you are interested in implementing any of these suggested activities, or any others you believe would be of assistance to your teachers, contact your DAC for guidance and/or assistance.

- * **Create your own information network:** Provide information to Cluster Teachers and other teachers within your school and district about any professional development activities associated with writing instruction or portfolios. Work with your DAC and Cluster Teachers to develop an on-going local newsletter/information sheet or group e-mail list to notify teachers in your district about these opportunities and other instructional activities/strategies being implemented in your district. Perhaps you can identify a writing leader in each of your schools who can receive the information and then disseminate it to the other cluster teachers within the individual schools.
- * **Create a Writing Study/Support Group:** Talk with teachers in your district to find out their level of interest in setting up a Writing Study/Support Group. These groups may take many forms: writing strategy sharing sessions, curriculum sharing sessions, student work analysis sessions, discussions focusing on professional readings, etc. Through sharing of ideas and support for new activities, teachers will become more confident and knowledgeable about writing instruction and portfolio development. (See the section in handbook regarding resources).
- * **Create and/or join a Professional Development Planning Committee:** Many districts have Professional Development Committees that work to locate professional development opportunities and organize PD activities for teachers in their districts. Find out about professional development planning in your district. Join your planning group or work with administrators to create a district-wide PD planning committee to identify professional development needs and resources and plan activities for your district's teachers.
- * **Create a professional library in your school or district:** The availability of up-to-date professional readings is critical for continuing growth of teacher knowledge and expertise. Find out if your school and/or district has a professional library for teachers. Work with other teachers in your district to create a professional library or to make suggestions concerning additional reading or KET telecast materials that should be added to any existing professional library. (See the section in handbook regarding resources).
- * **Join the KY WRITE Listserv at this internet address:**

<http://www.uky.edu/Education/kylists.html>

Visit the web site of **the Kentucky Council of Teachers of English/Language Arts:**

<http://www.kcte.org>

Kentucky Writing Development Teacher's Handbook, Kentucky Department of Education – 2005 Update